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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 180673

61
ORIGIN DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 ORM-02 VO-03 SCA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INSE-00 AID-05 SSO-00 /046 R

DRAFTED BY D/HA:HBCUSHING
APPROVED BY D/HA:JCARLIN
INS:SISENSTEIN
EA/PRCM:MVONBRIESEN
EA/VLC:JROSENTHAL
---------- 095075
O P 212145Z JUL 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 180673

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: BOAT CASES
-
REF: (A) HONG KONG 8507; (B) HONG KONG 8399; (C) HONG KONG
8394; (D) GENEVA 5718; (E) STATE 178281

1. DEPT APPRECIATES CONGEN'S ENERGETIC AND THOUGHTFUL
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PAGE 02 STATE 180673

EFFORTS BEHALF AVA REFUGEES, BUT WE MUST EMPHASIZE THAT

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

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REACHING HUMANITARIAN GOAL OF ESTABLISHING INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE OF ACCEPTANCE OF REFUGEES UNDER UNHCR AEGIS TAKES PRIORITY OVER QUICK SOLUTION OF RESETTLEMENT OF THOSE ABOARD AVA. COMMITMENT TO HKG RESPECTING 39 PRESUMPTIVELY ADMISSIBLE UNDER US PAROLE PROGRAM AND OTHERS UNDER CONDITIONAL ENTRY PRIOR TO THEIR DEBARKING WOULD WE BELIEVE SET PRECEDENT AND NUTURE THE ALREADY GROWING DISPOSITION OF COUNTRIES TO FORBID REFUGEES TO LAND UNTIL WE AGREE TO ACCEPT THEM. OUR LIMITS IN PAROLE PROGRAM, SEVENTH PREFERENCE, AND HUMANITARIAN EXCEPTION ARE FINITE, AND FOR SAKE OF FUTURE REFUGEES WE CANNOT NOW RISE ABOVE PRINCIPLE FOR SURVIVORS ON AVA. RESULT IN TIME WOULD BE INCREASE IN NUMBER OF REFUGEES FORCED BACK TO SEA -- MANY IN SMALL BOATS UNABLE TO MAKE SAFEHAVEN.

2. GENEVA REPORTS REFTEL D THAT UNHCR PREPARED UNDERTAKE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF REFUGEES, AND WE REQUEST CONGEN STRESS THIS WILLINGNESS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES' CAPABILITY TO ASSIST. DEPT AND INS WILL CONSIDER ADMISSION OF REFUGEES, BUT NO COMMITMENT TO ACCEPT ANY OR ALL WILL BE MADE BY USG AS A CONDITION FOR 'HOST' COUNTRIES' PERMISSION TO LAND. REFTEL E GIVES POLICY OF D/HA AND INS/CO AND PROCEDURES FOR POSTS IN MEETING THE CONTINUING PROBLEM OF ESCAPEES BY BOAT, AND DEPT URGES CONGEN HK AND POSTS ELSEWHERE IN SEA TO MAKE POSITION KNOWN. DEPT HAS INFORMED UK EMBASSY HERE ALREADY.

3. SPECIFIC REQUESTS PARA 6 REFTEL A THUS OUTSIDE POLICY, BUT IN FACT D/HA DISCUSSING GENERAL PROBLEM OF BOAT CASES AND SPECIFICALLY AVA SURVIVORS CONTINUALLY WITH VOLAGS. HKG CAN BE INFORMED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE SUFFICIENT CE NUMBERS HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR POSSIBLE USE BY THOSE OF 99 WHO DO NOT QUALIFY FOR INDOCHINA PROGRAM (FYI-75, BECAUSE SOME OF 39 MAY NOT MEET EPP CRITERIA), USG WILLINGNESS TO EXAMINE APPLICANTS UNDER BOTH EPP AND CE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE COMMITMENT TO ADMIT TO U.S. MOREOVER, ASSURANCES MAY BE GIVEN OF QUICK ACTION BY USG AND VOLAGS TO
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PAGE 03 STATE 180673

DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY AND PLACEMENT SHOULD REFUGEES BE PERMITTED ASHORE UNDER UNHCR PROTECTION. ROBINSON

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